

Draft Minutes of Northumberland Parent Carer Professional Forum (PCPF)

Venue: Stannington Village Hall

Date: Thursday 8 December 10.30-12.30

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| PRESENT: | Mark Bagott, Alison Bravey (Minutes), Lynn Bryden, Alan Carrick, Lesley Cole, Helen Elliott, Janice Gerard, Janet Millington, Joanne Nelson, Amanda Richardson, Elizabeth Richardson (Chair), Eileen Robinson, Doris Ross, Jacquie Simpson, Nicola Strachan |
| APOLOGIES: | Debbie Bakkali, Karen Carnaffin, Helen Cowens, Mary Johnson, Ann Jolley, Kath Lennon, Dorothy Lewis, Julia Lyford, Gill Turner |

| ITEM | DESCRIPTION OF DISCUSSION | ACTION BY |
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| 1. | Welcome and introductions | |
| 2. | <p>Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. An amendment was made to information on Raising the Participation Age – see item below.</p> <p>Matters Arising (not covered by the agenda)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare suitable for disabled children: continues to be an issue – item to be carried forward to future Forum meetings to keep it ‘on the radar’. • High level needs – ‘Raising the Participation Age’: It had been incorrectly reported that parents/young people could be prosecuted if a young person was NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) between the ages of 16 and 18. Local Authorities have no process for prosecuting them, their responsibility is to encourage. In the future there may be the potential to follow up young people who are NEET in a more formal way, but the emphasis will be on constructive ways of engaging with them; encouragement rather than enforcement. • Splinter Group: From the Horse’s Mouth conference – it was noted that this had been a fantastic conference lead by the young people, with inspirational speakers and a positive focus on disability and difference. • Dyslexia/dyspraxia referral system – it was queried whether there are approved people in schools and within the Local Authority to do assessments with ‘clout’ for children and young people with dyslexia. The Northumberland Local Authority position and provision with regard to dyslexia was clarified. It recognises specific learning difficulties; the most common of which are the specific literacy difficulties associated with dyslexia. Provision doesn’t depend upon a diagnosis of dyslexia. Children/young people learn in different ways, and need types and levels of support which match their individual needs. LISTs (Locality Inclusion Support Teams) have literacy specialists; teachers and literacy support assistants, who work with children and train staff in schools. Specific literacy difficulties are very common. No financial reason, or the staffing, to do more detailed assessments. <p>The Local Authority is producing leaflets on a range of topics, including specific literacy difficulties. Will be published on the Local Offer and show pathways for support. Emphasis is on intervention without the need for a diagnostic pathway. Provision according to the need of the individual child with regard to any type of learning difficulty/special need or disability. A child doesn’t need a diagnosis/‘label’ to be able to access support. School staff should be able to identify and evidence the level of need a child has and refer to LISTs if necessary.</p> <p>Discussion: It was commented that there is not equity across school settings with regard to SEND identification, assessment and provision. Some schools are able to describe and evidence SEN, and put the case across for additional support when it is required, but other schools are not as ‘switched on’ and it can often be a case of parents having to push to get the support their child needs.</p> | |

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| | <p>It was also noted that many schools manage young people with a range of needs extremely well. Parents will sometimes push for a diagnosis because this provides evidence in case things go wrong and gives ‘clout’ to the evidence presented to the Local Authority when requesting additional support through top-up funding or an EHC needs assessment.</p> <p>It was commented that SENCOs don’t need a qualification. <i>(N.B: It is a requirement in the SEND Code of Practice that SENCOs are qualified teachers and must achieve a National Award in SEN Coordination within three years of appointment, if they do not already have a qualification).</i> It was noted that some parents may feel that they are regarded as ‘bad parents’ and the cause of their child’s difficulties if there is no diagnosis to explain their child’s difficulties, or that unless their child has a diagnosis nothing will actually change with regard to the support they receive.</p> <p>The subject of ‘hidden disabilities’ was also raised. The emphasis with additional support in school is often on academic attainment, but children can have other types of disabilities; e.g. social and communication. Sometimes the child can appear fine in school, but may be very stressed by school and take this out at home. Support needs to be inclusive. It was noted that SEND Education Law identifies a special educational need as anything that impacts upon a child/young person’s ability to learn in nursery/school/college. It doesn’t take into account what happens at home and in other aspects of life. Need to look at ways of addressing what happens outside of the educational setting as this may affect a child’s school attendance and their educational progress.</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Holiday/Play activity schemes – Lynn Bryden</p> <p>Lynn outlined changes to how the Local Authority works with the providers of holiday/play schemes (e.g. Easter, Summer, Term time activities, including Saturday clubs) for children who are assessed by social care services as needing this provision. Previously the funding was through a grant application process, with places brought from specific providers, matching children to specific schemes. This process is no longer compliant with Local Authority procurement procedures.</p> <p>Future funding will be through a procurement-based process where providers will formally tender to be on the Local Authority procurement framework. Children will then be matched with a provider depending upon assessed need, and the provider will be paid for that individual place, rather than the previous system of “block purchasing” placements. The child’s placement will be agreed for a set period within the 2 year term of the contract and providers will no longer have to repeatedly apply for grant funding. The main difference is how providers are contracted and paid. Placements will be driven by the needs of the individual child rather than by a grant application process. Where children are in existing placements and the level of assessed need remains then no changes are proposed. The aim is to implement this with minimal disruption for providers, children/young people and their parents. Events have been held to brief the providers and answer any questions.</p> <p>Discussion/questions:</p> <p>It was asked if the procurement framework could be put on the Local Offer so parent can see what is available. Lynn will provide this information once the procurement process has been completed. Personal budgets (for social care) can be used for this provision or individual additional sessions. Main message to families is that although this is a change to how the Local Authority will work with providers, the level of provision for a child/young person’s assessed needs won’t change as a result of changing how the Council works with providers. It was noted that a child/young person’s social care needs are assessed every six months through their support plan. Lynn to provide an update on progress with the new way of working at the Forum meeting in May 2016.</p> | <p>Lynn Bryden</p> <p>Lynn Bryden</p> |

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| | <p>The information will take into account factors such as geography, age group and circumstances. It will contain a brief description of the SEN or disability, and where families can go for support at the different stages of a child/young person's life; pre-school, school, Post-16 and adult life. The leaflets will aim to be specific, practical and useful resources for families and professionals (e.g. SENCOs and new SEND staff).</p> <p>The issues that parents/carers have raised, including about Local Authority SEND policies, will be addressed and published on the Local Offer in the form of a report "You said - We did". There are often common themes that emerge: e.g. transport, housing, family support. With regard to strategic issues, part of Alan's remit is to produce a Northumberland SEND Strategy. Commissioners need to be part of the process of reviewing the quality standards set out in the NICE guidelines. Joint commissioning of services is a requirement of the SEND Reforms.</p> | |
| 5. | <p>Feedback from In It Together locality meetings:</p> <p>South East/Central Northumberland – Amanda Richardson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query re financial support with the purchase of nappies for a disabled three year old. Parent can be referred to the Continence Service through their GP or Health Visitor. Need to check whether information about this service is on the Local Offer. • The 'Managing Anxiety in Children with Additional Needs' training at Choppington Welfare, delivered by Kath Lennon and Pauline Stavely from the LISTs, was very well received. It was mentioned that some parents who had signed up for the training did not turn up on the day without ringing to let the organisers know, but there was still a good turn-out. • An aid to help children who have difficulty with tying their shoe laces is available at www.lacemups.com for £2.50. 'Curly Laces' are also designed to help with this. • The 'Go Henry' debit and credit service: for 11 years+ savers was mentioned. The child/young person pays money into the account and parents/carers receive feedback on how it is spent. Costs £1.97 per month for running costs. • Healthwatch: information/feedback covered GP services. <p>West Northumberland – Eileen Robinson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting attendance: The meeting has moved to Hexham, but turnout was still low. A member of CPYS staff will be coming to talk at the next meeting and hopefully this will encourage more parents to come along. • Top-up Funding and EHC (Education, Health and Care) needs assessments: The form used for applying for the above had been discussed. It was queried how schools are monitored to ensure that funding is used to meet the specific needs of individual children rather than be put into a general 'pot' for the school. <p>Discussion: Alan Carrick explained that there had been changes since the summer with how schools could apply for the funding, in order to streamline the process. Monitoring how funding is used by schools will be picked up by OFSTED – will specify what they want to see. High needs funding is provided in instalments by the Local Authority and termly feedback on progress is required. Need to create systems for monitoring the progress of individual learners in independent special schools and special schools maintained by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Ensuring that Teaching Assistants and SEND higher needs funding is used appropriately for over 1500 learners would require in excess of 5000 checks per year, which would require extra staffing, so the system is based on whether learners are making progress and followed up if there are concerns.</p> | Alison Bravey |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appealing to SEND Tribunal: a concern was raised that parents appealing to the Tribunal have to pay privately for solicitors. It was explained that having legal representation is not a requirement of the 'system' – having legal representation would be the choice of individual parents. | | | | | |
| 6. | <p>Information Sharing/AOB</p> <p>Careers Guidance Team: Janice Gerard: offered to provide information on the remit of the Careers Guidance Team as an agenda item at the next Forum meeting.</p> <p>CYPS update: Joanne Nelson: progress with commissioner's targets for the service over the last 18 months has been very positive and represents an incredible amount of work. Waiting times for different types of appointments have been greatly reduced.</p> <p>More people with mental health diagnosis presenting with phobias. CYPS teams can work with young people with certain phobias that fit the criteria checklist; e.g. phobias about dogs, cats. Joanne to provide details so this information can be shared with parents, etc.</p> <p>Northumberland Complex Sleep Clinic – for children/young people with complex sleep problems associated with mental health conditions (co-morbid conditions). No threshold for what is defined as 'complex'. The clinic uses the 'Sleep Scotland' model.</p> <p>Successful bid to NHS England for IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy). Lead partner: North Tyneside. Funding will provide backfill so frontline staff can be trained to deliver therapies in specific areas, including eating disorders and interpersonal skills. Rolling programme over the next 4 – 5 years.</p> <p>User participation in the transformation of child and adolescent mental health services – 'Future in Mind'.</p> <p>"Chill out" group for young people aged 9 – 13 years with anxiety difficulties. Parents should let their care coordinator know if they would like their children to access this group. It is run by Clinical Psychologists at the Howard Centre in Morpeth using a CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) approach.</p> <p>It was noted that CYPS staff include Psychologists, Psychotherapists and Art Therapists with a range of skills and approaches.</p> <p>Government Changes: Alan Carrick: Funding for the pre-school entitlement for some two years olds will be rising from 15 hours per week to 30 hours from 2017. It was noted that 30 hours is the same amount of time as a 16 year old in school.</p> <p>The government's agenda is to reduce the role that Local Authorities have with schools. There are proposed changes for the national funding formula for schools as well as for other services that are presently more locally based, to 'normalise' funding across the country.</p> <p>North Northumberland NAS (National Autistic Society) branch: Nicola Strachan: A group of parents are looking to set this up in Belford.</p> | <p>Janice Gerard</p> <p>Joanne Nelson</p> | | | | |
| 8. | <p>Dates of future meetings:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Thursday 4th February 2016</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Thursday 7th July 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday 5th May 2016</td> <td>Thursday 6th October 2016</td> </tr> </table> <p>Venue: Stannington Village Hall - all meetings 10.30 – 12.30</p> <p>❖ (Proposed pre-meeting for MAG Autism Group members from 9.30 – 10.30)</p> | Thursday 4th February 2016 | Thursday 7th July 2016 | Thursday 5th May 2016 | Thursday 6th October 2016 | |
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DISTRIBUTION LIST FOR MINUTES

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| Robert Arckless | County Councillor and Board Member for Children's Services |
| Mark Bagott | Consultant Paediatrician, Specialism in Autism, MAG Autism |
| Debbie Bakkali | Team Manager, Children's Services, Family Support Team |
| Alison Bravey | Parent Partnership Officer |
| Ann Brown | Operational Manager, Involvement & Service Development Team, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust |
| Siobhan Brown | Clinical Commissioning Group |
| Lynne Bryden | Senior Manager, Commissioning |
| Rebecca Campbell, | Service Manager, North of Tyne, |
| Karen Carnaffin | Team Leader, Families Information Service |
| Alan Carrick | SEND Commissioner |
| Mary Connor | Senior Manager, Early Intervention and Prevention |
| Mark Cusack | Passenger Transport Operations Manager |
| Helen Elliott | Healthwatch representative |
| Rachel Farnham | Children's Services Manager |
| Jean Hedley | Blyth Valley Children's Centre Locality Manager |
| Ann Jolley | SEN Lead Officer |
| Andrew Johnson | Director of Education and Skills |
| Mary Johnson | Co-ordinator of Dasl ⁹ e |
| Michael Kelcey | Northumberland Youth Service |
| Sarah Lee | Participation Adviser, Contact a Family |
| Daljit Lally | Executive Director, Wellbeing and Community Health |
| Kath Lennon | Specialist Teacher (ASD) Locality Inclusion Support Team (LIST) South East, MAG Autism |
| Dorothy Lewis | Children's Centre Coordinator - Seaton Valley Children's Centre, Team Manager - Community and Learning team, Volunteer Coordinator |
| Carol Macdonald | Portage Lead, Portage Service |
| Janet Millington | Clinical Lead, Speech and Language Therapy, MAG Autism |
| Marian Moon | Line Manager, Disabled Children Team, Northumberland Healthcare, NHS |
| Joanne Nelson | Consultant Clinical Psychologist, CYPS, MAG Autism |
| Michele O'Brien | Carer's Lead, Involvement & Service Development, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust |
| Amanda Richardson | Parent Representative, Central/South East Northumberland |
| Elizabeth Richardson | Parent Representative, North Northumberland |
| Eileen Robinson | Parent Representative, West Northumberland |
| Doris Ross | Team Manager, Disabled Children Team |
| Ben Sanderson | Youth Participation Worker, Northumberland Youth Service |
| Jacque Simpson | Parent Representative, North Northumberland |
| Jill Stewart | Community Clinical Manager for Northumberland, CYPS (Children and Young People's Service) |
| Katharine Taylor | Clinical Manager, Children and Families, Northumbria Healthcare Trust |
| Carys Thomas | Parent Representative, MAG Autism group |
| Gill Turner | Consultant Paediatrician, West Northumberland |
| Sue Welsh | Head of Therapies, Northumbria Healthcare, NHS |